

What is claimed is:

1. Process chamber of an installation for the thermal treatment of printed circuit boards (1), with a fan wheel (30) supported on a shaft (10) parallel to the printed circuit boards (1), said fan wheel (30) being disposed between two walls of the process chamber, **characterized in that** the fan wheel (30) is open at its two end faces (13, 14) and the two end faces (13, 14) are at such a distance from the walls (6, 7) of the process chamber that gas flows in unimpeded in two substreams (16, 17) between the end faces (13, 14) of the fan wheel (30) and the walls (6, 7) and flows out from the cylindrical surface of the fan wheel (30) over the length thereof and in the extent of the process chamber in the form of a ribbon-shaped gas stream (28), said gas stream (28) being directed essentially in said cross section through a channel (29, 24) onto the printed circuit boards (1).

2. Process chamber according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said process chamber is contained in a housing (2), said housing (2) forming with housing plates (19, 20) an intermediate space (18) with respect to the walls (6, 7) of the process chamber, in which intermediate space (18) the two substreams (16, 17) are guided and are supplied through penetrations (22, 23) in the housing plates (19, 20) to the end faces of the fan wheel (30).

3. Process chamber according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the fan wheel (30) is supported on one side in one of the two walls (6, 7).

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